

100

10

WAS, 1/4 ... 4 cases
GDC, 7/8 ... 2 cases
... 1 case
H&O, 2063/2066 ... 2 cases
L. Stael, 1 ... 1 case Baggage.
Hongkong, 6th January, 1974

Extracts.

IRISH SCHOOL BREAKS.
(From "Realities of Irish Life" New Edition.)

A new boy came to the school, who had been a Foulon or a Ribbunian, would have set the whole side of a country in a flame. He was an idle, bad, good-for-nothing boy, and having been severely flogged more than once for his lessons (dogging) was the order of the day if a boy failed in his task at the College of Armagh, he conceived a real hatred for the Doctor, whom he looked upon, and endeavored to set forth against him, as a tyrant, and a persecutor, whose aim and object was to injure and threaten the boys. He so far succeeded in establishing these sentiments against the really kind-hearted Doctor, that a series of annoyances of the most vexatious and perplexing character was planned, and set on foot to annoy him. The boys at Armagh had long had a fancy for dabbling in gunpowder experiments, and upon more than one occasion had scorched the skins of their own faces, and nearly blown the roof off the house, by accidental explosion, which took place during the manufacture of their fireworks. The new boy resolved to turn this fanciful propensity to the detriment and annoyance of the authorities. One of his acquaintances was to make up small parcels of gunpowder, wrapped tightly in numerous folds of brown paper. These he placed at the back of the first amongst the coats which had been recently heated on the grate, but which had not yet cooled. This performance he effected in playfulness, just as school was about to open, and explosion after explosion, to the amusement of all the assistants, was the result. This he called "blowing up the school," as the assistant-teachers were then called, and he generally was successful in that the explosion should take place just as the usher had gone to warn himself at the fire. However, however, he had confined his practice to the assistants; but having been severely flogged by the Doctor for some piece of mischief or idleness, he intended confidentially to some of the choice spirits whom he had selected to join him, that he would certainly blow up the Doctor. He accordingly purchased about half a pound of gunpowder, and having wrapped it in brown paper and placed it behind the coats, just previous to the hour when the Doctor according to custom came into the school, he retired to his desk, and gravely awaited the result. The school bell rang for business, and the assistants, who were deposited, and, as usual, the Doctor slowly entered the room, and took up his place with his back to the fire, and quietly lifting up the skirts of his coat, he stood warming himself with his hands behind his back. Suddenly—in a moment—he was recalled to actual life, and his position rudely forced upon his attention. A loud explosion took place, which violently burst open the door, and shattered every window in the large and lofty school-room. At the same time a volley of grape-shot—in the shape of small pieces of coal, aided by the severe concussion of the air—struck the Doctor flying into the midst of the school-room. He looked around in astonishment, not knowing in the least what had happened, but feeling his hands in pain, he looked at the assistants, and found them blackened with the coal. Turning round rapidly, he perceived that the fire was blown about the floor, and at once the whole of the unworthy pupil rushed upon his mind. He looked round gravely upon the school, and said:—

"There was a school dinner. Gravely the absurdity of the whole scene forced itself upon the imagination of the boys, inclined as they were to make fun out of everything, and an almost irresistible fit of laughter broke out. The Doctor waited until the fit had subsided, and then firmly saying—

"I will stop all the holidays until I know who did this," he walked out of the school-room.

I have already stated that the boys at Armagh were universally turbulent of what they termed, the "ancient rights of the school." They submitted to those rights themselves without murmuring, although some of them were occasionally very severely exercised.

Amongst the holidays very severely exercised, was a half-holiday every Wednesday, at which a premium had been obtained in Trinity College, Dublin, by any undergraduate who had been educated at the school; a whole holiday had been the rule of the school from time immemorial, and the privilege was guarded by the boys with the most jealous jealousy.

It was, therefore, supposed that the Doctor's announcement met with sympathy and approval. The whole bearings of this important case were fully discussed by the boys. The threatened infringement of our rights was looked upon as a most serious affair. The head boys of the school, after day after day in deliberation on this knotty point, at last hit the mark, and without any surprise upon the case, judicial spirit in which the whole case was taken up and fairly argued out before any decision was arrived at.

At length the head boys gave out their final verdict—that in that threatening to stop the holidays, because we would not break through our well-known code and turn informers upon our school-fellow, the Doctor had exceeded his power, and broken through the long-established rights of the school; and, although we deplored the act which had been done, we would not give up the delinquent. A statement to this effect was written out upon a round piece of paper, and left neatly folded and directed to the Doctor, on the table at which he usually sat. This document was usually for him, on the breaking-up of the school on each Tuesday evening, to announce whether the following day was to be a half or whole holiday, according to us we might be entitled to either, the announcement of that evening was looked forward to—I suspect by both parties, but certainly on our side with the utmost anxiety.

After the bell rang as usual, and the boys all stood up, preparatory to dismissal for the evening, The Doctor then announced, in a grave voice—

"Boys, there will be no holiday to-morrow."

Not a word was spoken. The Doctor left the room in silence, instead of being cheered, as he usually was when a whole holiday was granted. We soon went to dinner. Not a word was uttered during the meal, and it was evident to all as well as to ourselves that war had broken out between the parties. From that time, I regret to say, the boy whom we all knew to be mischievous and vicious, became a popular hero amongst us. He was now completely in his element.

"I told you," he cried, "that the Doctor was a tyrant and oppressor, who delighted in harassing us by every act of injustice in his power. Look at that! he now wants to do; to stop our holidays, one of the most ancient rights of the school! For one will never submit to it. Let us rise up against it, and carry the war into his own quarters, and you may depend on it we will put him down!"

Irritated as we were at the moment by our supposed wrongs, these sentiments were loudly cheered, and an aggressive course was determined on. It happened, at this time, that one of the ushers had rendered himself very unpopular amongst the boys, by a "sneaked" in the young account, and on more than one occasion, and the boy had been flogged in consequence—a punishment which he richly deserved.

That the usher should report him if he detected him in improper conduct was considered all fair and right amongst the boys. It was his acknowledged duty to report him, and it was our duty to report him to him for performing it. Not so, however, with this

worthy, who had now become our hero. And possessing, as he did, the peculiar art of making us the avengers of his own private wrongs, he conceived we were performing public duty, he soon turned the current of popular indignation against the unfortunate assistant. In accordance with this tone of feeling, the assistant was denounced as an enemy to the rights of the school; and it was resolved to punish him by giving him a judicial beating. But inasmuch as he was a young man, and we were well aware that the consequences of such an act, if the perpetrators were discovered, would be immediate expulsion from the school, he invented a plan for meeting all difficulties. He arranged, that in the evening, when the boys were preparing their lessons for the following day, a little boy should be sent up to the usher to the explanation of some Latin passage, and whilst he was thus engaged, some boy, bolder than the rest, was to come behind, and put a flag with running strings attached over the head of the unfortunate assistant; and the strings being drawn tightly around his neck, his enemies were then to be loose upon him, and to beat him to the ground. This diabolical plan was shortly afterwards put into execution. A little boy, carefully kept ignorant of the intended assault, was sent up to the usher to ask him the explanation of a passage in Ovid; and whilst he was engaged in the study of the sentences, a linen clothes-bag was suddenly pulled over his head. Two other boys, at a little distance, immediately pulled tight the strings, which were under sufficiently long for the purpose, and before the unfortunate man had an idea of the real position in which he was placed, every candle in the schoolroom was "doused," and shoes, handkerchiefs, dictionaries, school-books, and every kind of rubbish which was handy, was hurled at the head of the victim. The wretched man, not knowing what had happened, or what was about to happen, shrieked in the agony of his terror; and having at last succeeded in tearing the bag off his head, he rushed from the schoolroom amidst the shouts of the boys, and an increased storm of books, shoes, and bits of coal, and disappeared like a flash of lightning!

"Now, boys," cried our clever and malicious leader in a rapid voice, "he is gone for the Doctor. Light all the candles again; gather up the shoes and dictionaries; and if he all at work, learning your lessons like mad!"

In a moment all set to work. Feet were slipped into every outlying shoe, no matter what it might be, or whether it fitted or not; the dictionaries and books were collected in the twinkling of an eye; the bits of candles, which were lying in every part of the room, were crammed into their sockets and lit; and, in a surprisingly short time, every boy was lit at work at his own table or desk, with his hands up to his ears in an attitude of intense study, and a general hum of business, such as one hears in a busy crowded schoolroom, pervaded the whole assembly. In less than five minutes the Doctor rushed into the room, with a heavy nose-bleed in hand, followed by the unhappy assistant, who was looking as if he had been run over by a steam locomotive.

"What is all this?" cried the Doctor. "Who has been guilty of this outrage?"

He was going to proceed in his denunciations of this most heinous act, when he stopped short not two paces within the door.

"How is this?" said he, turning round to the usher behind him; "I thought you told me the whole school was in an uproar; they seem all quiet enough, and minding their business as usual."

The wretched man could scarcely speak a word; he was completely confounded and overcome. At this time, if he is still alive, I have no doubt he looks back upon the whole scene as the hallucinations of a fever, or, at best, he had not the faintest conception who had begged him; and even the name of the innocent little boy who had been put forward as a stalking-horse to capture him, had wholly escaped his memory. No action was, therefore, taken in the case, but a more stringent determination than ever was arrived at by the Doctor, to allow no holiday until the perpetrator of the bombshell scene should be brought to justice.

INSURANCES.

NORTH BRITISH AND MERCANTILE INSURANCE COMPANY.
INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER AND SPECIAL ACT OF PARLIAMENT.
Established 1809.
CAPITAL—£2,000,000.

THE Underwritten Agents for Hongkong for the above Company, are prepared to grant Policies against FIRE, to the extent of £10,000 on any Building, or on Merchandise in the same, at the following rates, subject to a discount of 20%.

Detached and semi-detached Dwelling Houses removed from Town, and their Contents, per cent. per annum.
Other Dwelling Houses, valued at less than £100, per cent. per annum.
Shops, &c., and their Contents, per cent. per annum.

SHORT PERIOD INSURANCES.
Not exceeding ten days, 1/2 of the annual rate.
Not exceeding 1 month, 1/3 of the annual rate.
Above 1 month, and not exceeding 3 months, 1/4 of the annual rate.
Above 3 months, and not exceeding 6 months, 1/5 of the annual rate.
Above 6 months, and not exceeding 12 months, 1/6 of the annual rate.

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INSURANCES.

NOTICE.
FROM and after this date the following rates will be charged for SHORT PERIOD INSURANCES, viz:—

Not exceeding Ten days, 1/2 of the annual rate.
Not exceeding 1 month, 1/3 of the annual rate.
Above 1 month, and not exceeding 3 months, 1/4 of the annual rate.
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INSURANCES.

IMPERIAL FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY.
INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER AND SPECIAL ACT OF PARLIAMENT.
Established 1809.
CAPITAL—£2,000,000.

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Other dwelling houses, valued at less than £100, per cent. per annum.
Shops, &c., and their contents, per cent. per annum.

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Detached and semi-detached Dwelling Houses removed